



United States Mint Launches Louisiana State Quarter

May 30, 2002

The Louisiana Quarter Meets the French Quarter

New Orleans, Louisiana — Governor M. J. “Mike” Foster, Jr. today joined United States Treasurer Rosario Marin and United States Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore at the New Orleans Mint Museum in New Orleans to unveil the Louisiana commemorative quarter-dollar coin, the 18th under the 50 State Quarters Program. The launch ceremony featured remarks from noted Louisianians, including William Arceneaux, President of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, former pro football player and outdoor sports commentator Bert Jones, and historian Nick Spitzer.

Following the launch event, Director Fore attended a collectors’ forum at which she fielded questions from coin collectors and dealers on a number of issues of interest to the numismatic hobby.

Louisiana joined the Union on April 30, 1812, becoming the 18th state. The Louisiana quarter design incorporates the image of a brown pelican, a trumpet with musical notes, and the outline of the Louisiana Purchase territory, with the inscription “Louisiana Purchase.” Louisiana’s nickname, the “Pelican State,” honors the state bird — the brown pelican — which is indigenous to Louisiana. The trumpet and musical notes represent the birth of jazz in New Orleans. The coin’s third element, the outline of the Louisiana Purchase territory, refers to the largest single expansion of the United States, which roughly doubled the size of the country in 1803.

“Today we celebrate Louisiana’s impact on the history, heritage and culture of this great nation,” said Director Fore. “How fitting that the historic New Orleans Mint, which first struck gold coins in 1838, now plays host to Louisiana’s very own coin — the Louisiana quarter.” She added that Louisianians should be proud of this coin and the place it now takes as the 18th state in the 50 State Quarters Program.

“The launch of the Louisiana quarter is one of those moments that makes me proud of Louisiana,” said Governor Foster. “It was a long process, but one that involved the citizens of this state, by asking for their help in designing the quarter. The final design shows the best of Louisiana’s treasures; its music, its heritage of conservation and the Louisiana Purchase.”

Governor Foster established the Louisiana Commemorative Coin Advisory Commission, which solicited design concepts from all Louisiana residents, encouraging school children’s participation. The Commission’s Official Rules state that the final design must be “...easily understood by both the youth of the state of Louisiana and the youth of other states.” Of the 1,193 submissions the Commission received, a large majority came from school children. After consulting with the Commission, Governor Foster submitted five design concepts to the United States Mint, including the brown pelican, the Louisiana Purchase territory, a riverboat, and the Cabildo. U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill approved the final design.

The Louisiana quarter, officially released to the Federal Reserve Bank on May 20, marked the end of the Ohio quarter 10-week release period, which began in March 2002. The quarters are manufactured at the Philadelphia and Denver Mints, which produce all U.S. circulating coins and ships them to the Federal Reserve Bank for distribution to the nation’s banks.

Launched in 1999, the United States Mint’s 50 State Quarters Program is a 10-year initiative that honors each of the nation’s states in the order that they joined the Union. Each quarter is produced for about 10 weeks and will never be produced again. Surveys show that over 139 million adults are collecting the quarters.

The 50 State Quarters products, including the popular collectible proof sets featuring the five state quarters of each year, are available on our website, www.usmint.gov, and by calling 1-800-USA-MINT. Other products include spoons, key fobs, bookmarks, golf divot tools and pendants. Watches and desk clocks featuring the Louisiana state quarter will be available later this spring.

Created by Congress in 1792, the United States Mint is a manufacturing and international marketing enterprise with \$2.4 billion in annual revenue and about 2,400 employees. In FY 2001, the United States Mint produced approximately 24 billion coins, fulfilling its primary mission to produce an adequate supply of circulating coinage for the nation’s commerce. For more information, please visit www.usmint.gov.

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